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AUTHOR Bell, Patricia Ann
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ABSTRACT

Reported are conclusions from the continuation of an investigation into cross-cultural aspects of education of children of 3-8 years of age. Discussion focuses on educational practices in Australia, Austria, India, Russia, and Zimbabwe. Topics include teacher actions and verbalizations, and school organization and administration. Teacher actions are discussed in terms of behavior toward individuals, small groups, large groups or whole classes, and teacher demonstrations of lesson content. The material on teacher verbalization focuses on such behavior as contributing bodily presence, responding to requests of children, elaborating on information already given, asking children to respond, and intervening to help students give the desired response. Concluding discussion includes notes on organization and administration, specifically pupil-teacher ratio, teacher and in-service training, and financial support. (RH)

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Early Childhood Education

Teacher Behavior From A Cross Cultural Perspective: Further Observations

Patricia Ann Bell

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Teacher Action

Behavior
Demonstration

Teacher Verbal

Contributes bodily presence
Responds to requests of child
Adds more elaborate information
Asks child to respond
Intervenes, part or all of response

Some Notes on Organization and Administration

Pupil-Teacher ratio
Teacher training and in-service
Financial support

Subsequent to earlier work, (Bell, 1984), further investigation into cross cultural aspects of education of the young child, ages three to eight, have continued and herein center on Australia, Austria, India, Russia and Zimbabwe.

Comparative statements about teacher behaviors from a broad based cross-cultural perspective are limited. This work addresses such a void.

Learning environments for children from the ages of three years to eight years included preschool environments and the first several grades of elementary school. Elementary schools and day care centers represent both private fee paying and public government funded institutions. For example, in India both private fee paying elementary schools and government funded elementary schools were visited and there were no documented differences in teacher behavior toward children. The major difference was that the government funded schools were almost devoid of learning materials while the private fee paying schools were only marginally less so. In Russia visitations included government funded day care and communal farm day care with the major difference being that the communal farm day care center showed more evidence of a greater variety of "hands on" activities for children enrolled there.

Since no variation can be substantiated for different teacher behaviors in private and government funded environments investigated here both were lumped together in the subsequent discussion. Exceptions will be clearly noted.

No environments for divergent populations, such as handicapped children, are included in this discussion, nor are any special approaches, such as Montessori, included in this discussion.

Many similarities in instructional style repertoire exist in environments for the child from three years to eight years of age. Major differences seem to be in overall style of the teaching process and funding available for the school, so that well funded countries and their schools engage in more "hands on" and small group or individual work, while less well funded countries and their schools employ a copy-book and recitation style of instruction. This difference surfaced in earlier work in relation to education in China and the other countries discussed, (Bell, 1984).

In general, training for work with the under fives is vocational high school preparation or no training in the countries under discussion with the exception of Australia which has post secondary requirements stipulated by government authorities. Work with the over fives requires some type of post secondary training.

TEACHER ACTION

Behavior Toward Individuals:

In all environments children were dealt with on an individual basis when the need arose. Classrooms of fewer children resulted in more individual contact with teachers and classrooms of between 40 and 65 children revealed very little individual attention per child. Teachers' personal skills in classroom management were evident with some teachers being more able to manage children while attending to individual needs than others.

An Australian environment dealt with each individual child by conferring with each child about activity choice and designating such choice on the name list as well as on the back of the child's hand with a "t" as the library fieldtrip and an "o" as the alternate field trip. Some children received no mark , as they chose to remain in the classroom. Most individual teacher-child episodes involved choices of equipment, help with work activities, management of food, reading, play options available, and disagreements over space utilization and equipment. The level of teacher-child contact was high in Australian environments.

Austrian environments dealt with individual children readily. The amount of individual attention children received was high. Usual episodes for the youngest children centered around activity choices, space utilization and equipment choices, changing activities, dressing and the like. Older children sought bids for attention based on sharing some event with the teacher before or after school, knowing the response to a question and having work checked by the teacher.

Indian classrooms evidenced very little teacher behavior toward individual children in learning episodes. In one environment it was noted that individual attention was given only to disruptive children during the disruptive episode. Most individual teacher-child behavioral episodes were reserved for directing a child to respond or recite or to correct disruptive behavior.

Russian environments tended not to place emphasis on individual teacher-child behavior. Teachers dealt with the group as a whole and methods of dealing with and directing children seemed to differ relatively little regardless of the age of the child. Individual babies were tended to if they whimpered and older youngsters were asked to recite or chosen if they raised their hands to respond to a question.

Zimbabwian observations reveal individual teacher-child behavioral episodes revolved around asking children to respond, helping individual children with maths and language(English,Shona) and school work. Occasionally contacts were made at recess.

Behavior Toward Small Groups:

Teachers in all schools visited interacted with children in small groups of two or three or more children. Some of the contacts were within learning episodes and others took place while settling the groups to work or upon dismissal.

Australian teachers interacted with children in small groups very frequently. Such interactive episodes revolved around daily routines and learning activities.

Teachers in Austrian environments interacted with children in small groups. Such interactions were usually in connection with daily routines of the classroom or coming to order to start some work or other learning activity. Austrian teachers observed interacted with children whenever responses were requested or necessary to redirect children. Children were observed working together when the activity was appropriate in many instances and teachers dealt with such group units.

Indian classroom structure did not present opportunities for small group work. Most work was individual in copy books or when one individual was called upon to respond or recite. Teachers' efforts to control children and settle them down to work were directed toward small groups when such teacher behavior seemed appropriate.

The Russian environments observed were not structured to accommodate small group work during learning tasks. In the Russian environments observed children worked individually or the total group was engaged in the activity. This style of teacher behavior was observed in day care centers and elementary schools. Contact with small groups was observed at play periods.

Teachers in Zimbabwe did respond to children in small groups. Some classrooms were organized so that children sat two-by-two and in these environments teachers responded to small groups during such learning exercises as math problems, writing exercises and reading. In schools where seating was individual teachers were not observed responding to small groups, as work was individual, whole group, or one child was asked to respond.

Behavior Toward Large Groups or Whole Class:

In all school environments teachers interacted with the whole class or as much of it as would come to attention. In daycare centers it is not possible to do much of anything by asking a group to comply; individual reinforcement of directions is the norm with the very young. In general, smaller classes were easier to deal with and quite large groups required reinforcement of directives and individualized attention.

Indian schools often had between 40 and 60 children per room, Zimbabwian schools often in the 40's and Russian schools often between 30 and 40 children per class room. Austrian classrooms hovered nearer 30 children per classroom and Australian classrooms tended to be similar.

Group directives were common when bringing the group to attention at the beginning of the day, changing activities (recess, play period, dismissal, moving to the next subject) and moving children to various locations within the school.

Teachers in Australian environments dealt with the group as a whole when starting the work, controlling behavior to and from out of doors, transitions to new work activities and at the termination of an activity. In all cases there was also interaction with individuals or small clusters of children who were noncompliant or slow or who needed assistance. In environments for preschool children there was more individual and small group contact and subsequent direction.

Teachers in Austrian environments dealt with the group as a whole when starting the activity, changing from one activity to another, moving to different parts of the school building and dismissal. Children who progressed slowly or who needed help received individual or small group interaction. In environments for preschool children there was a bit more individualized attention, but on the whole these children were compliant and very able.

Indian teachers dealt with the group as a whole as the most common teaching strategy observed in primary schools. When a child was called upon to recite, the rest of the class was expected to remain silent and did so very well. Children worked in copy books and in the schools observed, all children did the same lesson.

In preschool environments group directives were used to start the day, to note transitions such as clean up, snack, outdoor time and story circle. Individual reinforcement of directives was used freely with the very young.

Russian teachers dealt with the class as a whole as the most common teaching style. This was observed to be the most common style of directing preschool and school age children. Recitation or responding was a group activity as the whole group was expected to wait in silence until the episode was over and the next question was posed. Preschool children experienced individual teacher-child behavior if they were seriously lagging or simply could not perform a task. Infants were dealt with individually for care needs and were often placed multiply in large play pens.

Teachers in Zimbabwian classrooms dealt with the class as a whole as the most common teaching style. Directives to the whole class were given to start the work for the day, to change from one activity to the next, to go out of doors

for recess, to go home and so on. There were many instances of individual and small group contact but the general control element was by group directive.

Generalizations about teacher style from a cross cultural perspective reveal that basic operational and control skills are quite similar but the extent to which skill or method of teaching dominates a culture differs and it appears to differ in relationship to the amount of learning equipment available in a classroom. In a total composite of former work (Bell 1984) plus this work, a total of nine educational systems have been perused for teacher behaviors; England, Israel, Seychelles, China, Australia, Austria, India, Russia, and Zimbabwe. The general observation has been that where learning equipment and activities are abundant, there is more individual and small group experience for children in the learning process. Class size has not been observed to be a controlling variable as small class size in Russia and China did not result in teachers' use of individual or small group work with children and class size of over 40 in a Zimbabwian school did not preclude small group work.

Teacher Demonstrations:

Teachers demonstrated skills, activities, sequencing, and order in all elementary schools visited. Such demonstrations occurred in reading lessons, writing lessons, gametime in the classroom, responses in science lessons, and maths. Teachers demonstrated for the whole class most of the time and upon occasion for small groups of children or individuals. Much of this type of instruction depended upon the topic under discussion and whether or not there was room for the teacher to move among the pupils' work sites.

Teachers in Australian environments demonstrated how to use equipment when the need was evident and how to do skills which were those that children were currently trying to master.

Teachers in Austrian environments demonstrated new skill for the whole group and again, as necessary, to individuals as the need arose. Such demonstrations occurred in working through sequence activities, making higher case letters, learning words to musical selections, learning new games and the like. Styles of presenting information seemed rather similar, irrespective of whether the level was preschool or elementary level.

Teachers in Indian elementary classes observed demonstrated to whole groups and seldom to an individual or group of individuals. Preschool children learned songs, rhymes, games and so on by demonstration to the group as a whole and subsequent group practice.

Teachers in Russian elementary classrooms visited demonstrated to the whole group at music sessions, at a photo session, during science lessons, English lessons, and maths. There is some emphasis on performance groups in some schools and in the early learning stages of music, dance and mime (acting out play with no words or a teacher reading a script) there must be some direct instruction involving some degree of demonstration.

Teachers in Zimbabwian schools demonstrated to the whole group most of the time. Such demonstrations occurred during lessons involving science, maths, songs, reading, English and Shona.

Demonstrations were clearly part of the plan of instruction in the Pioneer's Palace visited in Russia. Demonstrations were observed in radio communications, music, dance and the like.

TEACHER VERBAL

Teachers spoke to children individually, in small groups, in larger groups or the whole class, as the situation warranted. Some teachers make greater use of dealing with children individually or in small groups while others almost always address the group as a whole. Teacher repertoire is reasonably similar, but the extent to which habitual use is made of total group control measures versus individual or small group control measures differs dramatically.

Teachers in Australian environments spoke to children individually, in small groups or in larger groups as the situation warranted. When the whole group needed to move, such as out to play, return to indoors or stop for lunch, the whole group was addressed. In situations involving individuals or several children, children were addressed separately or in the small group. Individual or small group language contact centered around activity choices, whom to sit next to, the schedule for the afternoon and/or the next day, the learning content of the theme for the day or week, which field trip one would choose, printing letters, and so on. Much exchange of language was observed, both among children and between teachers and children; a high verbal environment which was informative in nature was the norm in Australian classrooms.

Teachers in Austrian classrooms spoke to children individually, in small groups and to the total group as the need warranted. Children seemed free to converse with one another at appropriate times and teachers were in almost constant conversation with various pupils about various issues. These observations revealed a "high verbal" teaching style which was explanatory or informative in nature. Teachers conversed with children about everything that was happening in the classroom, the activities of the after school time the previous day,

activities which would happen that day after school, games during mini-indoor study breaks, maths, reading, drawings the children made, routines of the day and so on.

Teachers in the Indian elementary classrooms observed spoke to the classroom as a total group most often. The language used by the teacher was inquiry followed by calling on a child or acknowledging a child with a raised hand to give the answer. The observations made of Indian schools in this sample seem remarkably similar in this respect and the use of language is to teach by memorization, by recitation, by rote, and by copying into copy books. Teachers were observed to limit verbal contact to the group as a whole or upon rare occasion, to settle a child who needed to be redirected. Teachers addressed the total group when it was appropriate to start the day, change subject matter emphasis, work at copying in their copy books, leave the room for recess, leave at the end of the day and so on. Teachers' style of teaching is not a high verbal style nor is it in any way very interactive. Teachers in preschool environments tended to verbalize more on one to one basis or a small group basis, as these children were engaged in more individual type play activities. During group activities teachers addressed the total group. Preschool environments could not be labeled "high verbal" as teachers conversations with children were infrequent. The use of language tended to be more to exert control than to inform.

Teachers in Russian elementary classrooms spoke to the group as a whole most often. The whole class was addressed for purposes of starting the day, changing from one activity to another, passing from one room to another, going out of doors and other such matters which pertained to the total group . Comments directed to individuals generally dealt with requests to contribute through answering a question or recitation. Comments directed to small groups of children were evident when children were forming a line to exit the room, participating in music and mime activities and so on. Most of the comments directed to small groups were for purposes of group control or the management of group movement.

Teachers in Zimbabwian schools observed spoke to the group as a whole most often. Instructional comments were most likely to be to the group as a whole. Examples were to start the day, move from one subject matter to another, to break for recess and the like. Comments to individuals were to control children as well as to assess or help work the child was engaged in. Most contacts with individuals were for control of behavior. Comments directed toward small groups, usually those sharing sitting places, were for control of behavior and to assess or help with the work activity.

Contributes Bodily Presence:

Some teachers in environments observed moved closer to the youngsters with whom they were interacting, especially when controlling behavior or checking on a child's work or talking a child through a task.

Teachers in Australian environments usually moved so as to make a conversation with a child a more intimate experience. Close proximity to the child was a very frequently observed event. Teacher behavior in Australian environments on a one to one basis in close proximity to the child was frequently observed. When teachers felt that a child needed help they often moved so they were close enough to the child to help with the activity. Several examples were in writing one's name, helping a child find a place to sit at lunch, sorting out conflicts over space and equipment, quelling inappropriate behavior when it was in the initiation stage, and helping youngsters into the van to go on a field trip.

Teachers in Austrian environments, in both preschool and elementary classrooms, frequently moved to within proximity of the youngster being dealt with. This was a very common observation. Teachers moved closer to particular youngsters when writing names on art projects, checking sums and other work sheets, responding to individual inquiries children made, explaining work to children and while talking children through various work activities. Austrian teachers' style of dealing with children was quite individualized and utilized close physical proximity to the child.

Teachers in Indian elementary schools were not observed dealing with children in instructional episodes by intentionally moving closer to the child. When children responded or recited teachers remained at their desks and children remained at their appointed desks or tables. Occasionally children worked on the board. Teachers remained at the teacher's station (or desk) almost universally. When a child started to get out of order, teachers used a raised voice at the child to quell the undesired behavior and the teacher remained at the teacher's desk. Copy books were left at the teacher's desk for later checking. In preschool environments teachers positioned themselves close to children, especially disruptive children, and this was more for control than for instruction.

Teachers in Russian elementary schools were not observed dealing with children by moving closer to the child being dealt with, with the exception of lining up children so as to position children according to height or position them for music, dance or mime presentations. During classroom instructional episodes where children were called on to respond or recite the child normally did so by standing at one's seat or table. Teachers did not move closer to the child responding to the task. In preschool centers teachers moved closer to children so as to help them with dressing and feeding needs. Teachers, in general, remained

separate and in front of their respective groups of children.

When observing the dance class at the Pioneer's Palace the teacher dealt with each dancer individually in terms of body position, dance step and execution.

Teachers in Zimbabwian classrooms moved closer to children they were working with. Teachers approached individuals and small group at times. Examples of moving closer to whomever the teacher was dealing with arose in maths, reading and putting things away to go out for recess. The greatest frequency of behavioral episodes was toward the group as a whole, and interactive episodes with individuals or small groups were less frequent, although they did occur.

Responds to Request of Child:

There was observed to be an indentifiable difference in requests for adult time and attention among educational systems.

The Australian and Austrian environments evidence much child participation in the learning process as well as the general socialization of the child through conversation which was particular to the learning task and also conversation which was general in nature. The Russian and Indian elementary school environments tended to have no bids for teacher explanations or assistance from children. There was no casual conversation observed between adult and child in the learning environment within elementary schools. In the Russian preschool environments children who were having difficulty (dressing, feeding) simply sat until an adult ventured forth to alleviate the issue. In the Indian preschool environments children were quite independent and teachers tended to spend the bulk of their time controlling space, equipment and behavior. There was almost no casual conversation observed.

Classrooms observed in Zimbabwe revealed very few bids for teacher time. Children were instructed in ways which require memorization, rote and copying as opposed to a high level of verbal fluency.

Teachers in Australian environments responded to the many questions of children while keeping the activities of the day on track. In general, responses to individuals dealt with the use of space and equipment, how long before the field trip children depart, writing the letters which comprise one's name, names of days of the week, which days are school closing days and so on. Some children seemed to continue sporatic conversation with certain adults and adults were compliant. Children appeared free to initiate requests for assistance or conversation at will.

Austrian teachers were constantly responding to requests of children. In general bids for attention were acknowledged at preschool and elementary levels. Preschool childrens' needs centered around learning to print their names on their art works, dressing, toileting and routine personal care events. Elementary children expressed more diverse needs in their bids for time ranging from math problems, work sheet questions about stories assigned, an event from yesterday, something which was to take place later that afternoon, and just the socially uplifting experience of a moment of conversation with the teacher. The teachers observed were all highly responsive to children's bids for time and classroom environments were highly verbal during appropriate times.

Teachers in Indian classrooms seemed not to face bids for time or conversation from children. This was especially so in the elementary classrooms observed and only slightly less so in the preschool rooms observed. Children were not observed to attempt to gain the attention of the teacher in a one-on-one behavioral episode. Teachers who were observed did not cater to individuals within the classroom; behavior was group oriented unless it happened to be for behavior control.

Teachers in Russian classrooms seemed not to face bids for time or attention from their children. Lack for bids for attention were striking in preschool environments and elementary classrooms. Children were not observed to attempt to gain the attention of the teacher in a one-on-one behavioral basis in any classroom observed.

Teachers in Zimbabwian classrooms were not observed to be requested to engage in one-on-one behavioral episodes by children. Children were interested and absorbed in their work, but carried on alone or just sat motionless when they could not proceed. In no classroom was a child observed requesting help from the teacher.

<u>Adds More Elaborate Information:</u>

In some schools teachers discussed the topic further or explained a problem to a child, thereby adding more elaborate information to the situation. This was observed to occur in Australian and Austrian environments and was conspicuously absent in the environments observed in India, Russia and Zimbabwe.

Teachers in Australian environments employed high verbal styles of interaction with children. Teachers elaborated on many topics of conversation and encouraged children to further the topic by additional inquiry when appropriate. The use of bulletin boards, schedules, outlines of work plans for the day, week, month and season all serve to extend the child's information.

Teachers in Austrian environments employed high verbal styles of interaction with children. Teachers encouraged children to use information and extend it during English lessons, during short indoor work breaks, during non-school hours, during "the world and people around us" which blended geography, history and culture, and so on. Work books and work sheets provided practice and reinforcement for children's learnings. Abundant drawings of one's choice were evident in preschool and elementary classrooms.

Teachers in Indian classrooms observed, both preschool and elementary, did not use illustrative materials with youngsters to any extent. No use of classroom schedules, plans of work for the short or long term were in evidence nor were there any interest area corners or bulletin boards which could be used to extend the child's knowledge. Teachers' verbal styles were to inform and control more than to extend a child's knowledge by adding more elaborate information. Children copied from the blackboard into their copy books and independently worked any problems. Most of the copy work was straight copying as opposed to problems to solve. Maths was the notable exception, as children had to compute the answers.

Teachers in Russian classrooms observed, both preschool and elementary, did display art work and craft work of children. No other means to add more information to the child's repoirtoire were observed. Teachers used language to inform and control, but not to expand on a topic for an inquisitive child. No use of bulletin boards and interest corners, schedules, plans of study for the short term or long term were in evidence. In elementary classrooms there were often several posters on the walls and these had not been changed for a long time. In the Pioneer's Palace classes, which are open only to the preselected best students in the area, extension of skill development is pursued. Such classes are in music, art, dance, radio, chess, model building, and the like. Schools often have some clubs where youngsters can pursue a particular interest; this opportunity is for children who are older.

Teachers in Zimbabwian classrooms visited seemed not to add more elaborate information to the topic through conversation, illustrative materials or enrichment activities. Lessons were straight forward and consisted of memorization, working sums and group responses in the lessons on English and Shona. No examples were observed in any classroom, rural or urban, of extending children's learning through workbooks or work pages, bulletin boards, learning centers on a particular topic, schedules for short term plans or long term goals or plans, lists of which children are doing a particular activity and the like. There was no evidence anywhere of requiring children to use their school learned skills to operate at a higher level within the school setting.

Asks Child to Respond:

In all elementary schools visited teachers asked children to respond to some part of the lesson, such as recitations of memorized information, sums, answers pertaining to lessons previously presented and the like. Preschool environments did not pose academic questions to the very young; such inquiries dealt with space, equipment, social behavior, change of activity choice and the like.

Australian teachers asked children to respond frequently. Much of this was on an individual basis. Questions related to topics such as school work, social friendships, after school play friends, school activity choices, vacation plans, and so on. Topics of conversation that varied were related to the child's life, more than just to what happened in the classroom.

Teachers in Austrian environments asked children to respond. The style of this was to ask the whole class for a volunteer, as opposed to preselecting a particular child. Although particular children were called on, it was rare. Requests for respondents were observed during maths, English lesson, small mini-recess in the classroom, reading and the like. Teachers dealt with many children on an individual basis also. Children were occasionally asked to pass out items.

Teachers in Indian elementary classrooms asked particular children to respond. Although volunteers were accepted upon occasion, the typical instructional style was to call on a specific youngster for the response. This format was observed in maths, language, recitations of poems and the like. Children spent a large part of the time working in copy books and such response would be individual and in writing. Requests for verbal responses which involved one child responding were, in reality, group events as opposed to individual teacher-child interactions, as the group remained attentive to the episode.

Teachers in Russian elementary classrooms typically asked particular children to respond. Volunteers were sometimes requested but this was by far, less common. The typical teachers style was to pose the question or issue the directive and then call on a child to comply. This was observed in science, maths, English, and such subjects. Requests for responses were lesson related and while one child responded, it was really a group activity as opposed to an individual teacher-child event, as the group remained attentive to the episode. During dance, music and mime certain children had individual parts and responded accordingly.

Teachers in Zimbabwian schools called on children to respond. The usual format was to pose a question and then select a child to respond. Teachers usually selected the respondent,

but upon occasion volunteers were requested and the teacher selected a respondent from among the volunteers. This format was observed in maths, reading, English, Shona and the like. Responding was really a group activity, as other children were to remain attentive. All responses observed were lesson related.

Intervenes, Part or All of Response:

Teachers were observed helping children respond to questions or to continue their work in Australia and Austria. Such enabling teacher behaviors were not observed in elementary schools in India, Russia, or Zimbabwe. In preschool environments in Austria, India and Russia, teachers just did the task as opposed to helping the child through the activity.

Teachers in Australian environments helped children with tasks such as space and equipment utilization, artwork, lunch, and the like. Teachers often observed for a moment to determine how the situation was progressing and then intervened if that seemed appropriate.

Teachers in Austrian elementary schools helped children work through more difficult tasks by rewording and sometimes re-explaining difficult segments. Teachers also supplied information, such as concepts or facts, to help the child move forward with the problem. Teachers usually supplied bits of information until the child was able to cope with the question. Such aid was observed in lessons in what has been referred to as " the world and people around us", maths, and games at mini-indoor study breaks. Observations revealed that teachers of elementary students were more apt to help the child work to completion of the task on an individual basis, while teachers of preschool children more often did the task for the child.

Teachers in Indian elementary classrooms were not observed to talk a child through a problem to completion of the issue. Rather, teachers tended to select an alternate child when the original pupil faltered. Teachers sometimes supplied the correct response and then directed the reciting child to sit. When the responding child needed a simple help, such as one or two words, the teacher would sometimes supply what was necessary. Such help on the parts of teachers was rare. Situations which needed minute help were sometimes ameliorated while long term help was not observed to be rendered. Examples of short term help were almost exclusively restricted to the recitation of poems and rhymes.

Teachers in Russian elementary schools helped children by intervening when the information which was needed was minute.

Usually this intervention was restricted to part of the recitation, such as a word or several words. Upon occasion teachers aided individuals in dance or mime by facing them the correct way or re-pairing a child with its intended partner. Lengthy episodes of helping a child work through a learning task were not observed in any Russian child environment. Teachers in preschool environments simply execute the task for the child.

Teachers in Zimbabwian environments intervened to help a child when the amount of information to be supplied was slight, such as one or two words, in the answer to maths and the like. Lengthy episodes of helping a child work through a learning task were not observed in any Zimbabwian elementary classroom. Rather, children who faltered severely during recitation sessions were seated and another child chosen to continue.

SOME NOTES ON ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Pupil Teacher Ratio:

The pupil teacher ratio varies dramatically among the schools observed. In Australia there were about 25 to 29 children in the environments observed and government regulations on pupil teacher ratio vary according to the age of the children being dealt with. The Austrian elementary school classrooms ranged from 22 to 28 pupils per room. This was also true for the preschool environments. Indian classrooms, in both government funded and fee-paying private schools, easily had upwards of 60 youngsters per classroom with one teacher. One quite well equipped modern private preschool had fifteen children per classroom; a unique situation. Russian elementary classrooms seemed to average between 30 and 40 children per teacher while preschool ratios were more likely to be between 20 and 25 children with a teacher and her aide; in some cases there were three adults with the youngest children. In Zimbabwian elementary classrooms there were often 40 and more youngsters.

Teacher Training:

Teacher training for preschool children is seldom any training. However, Australia does offer post secondary training for working with preschool children and some individuals within the environment must be thusly qualified. A certificate as a medical nurse is acceptable for this qualification, also. Primary teachers must be appropriately trained and have earned teaching certificates.

Austrian teachers in preschool environments normally qualify by taking a secondary vocational training course which makes them approximately 19 years of age at the exit point. Teacher training for primary school work is post secondary and was recently increased to the study time of three years.

Indian teachers in preschool environments normally have not received any appropriate training, however there are several Home Economics Teacher Training Colleges which do provide such training. Teachers in elementary schools must be appropriately trained and degreed.

Russian teachers in preschool environments may or may not be trained. There are 4 year college programs of training for nursery and kindergarten teachers. Teachers in elementary schools must have teacher training preparation which is 4 years in duration.

Zimbabwian elementary teachers must have completed appropriate post secondary courses of study and time under the guidance of a certified teacher (often termed student teaching). Teachers in elementary school must be appropriately certificated.

Teacher training for the under-fives assumes a very minor position in teacher training requirements within the teacher training system in all countries surveyed here except Australia. Australian government requirements exist and this is noteworthy. It must be noted that Austria has had vocational secondary programs for such training for quite some time.

However, more emphasis is put on the elementary school age child in all cultures. Australia is turning some attention to the preschool level as more mothers work and subsequently seek child care environments.

Inservice training programs vary from mandated to nothing. The Moscow area requires in-service days for teachers and in Tblisi teachers reported having to spend one month once every five years at the Institute to update their training.

Financial Support:

Environments were mixed; some were private pay-as-you-go with no government support, some were private pay-as-you-go with government support and some were totally government supported. The Russian Communal Farm day care center was funded by that commune and was for its own children. The Pioneer's Palace in Russia was government funded and most teachers were expected to donate instructional time. Parents usually paid for ballet slippers and leotards and other such personal items which the children needed.

Generally every country observed has government funded (non fee-paying) elementary schools. Parents are usually expected to pay for supplemental materials such as crayons, pencils, leotards, dance costumes, musical instruments and the like. Fee paying for education beyond the elementary level occurs in numerous instances and in some instances this fee may be waived when a child's achievement level test scores are suitably high.

Government funded pre-schools, for which parents pay a very nominal additional fee, abound in Austria. There are also private pre-schools. Other countries observed did not have similar programs for preschools available on a country wide basis as has Austria.

Day care centers for children whose parents are at work all day are not "universal" either privately or government funded. Private day care does exist in some relatively urban areas. Some government day care is available for the needy and income qualifying systems influence who can enter; payment is determined by a sliding scale (Russia, Australia). The Russian Communal Farm provided its own day care and absorbed its own cost.

Indian pre-schools were fee paying, private enterprises. Indian elementary schools are both fee-paying, private as well as free, government funded. However, many fee-paying private elementary schools receive government grants.

Clearly, the funding patterns of enterprises for children from three years of age to eight years of age are very mixed.

NOTES

Bell, Patricia. Early Childhood Education: Teacher Behaviors From a Cross Cultural Perspective. (ED 245 807, 14) 1984.